

Lesson Unit 6: Four Noble Truths

Learning Outcomes:

At the completion of the lesson, students will be able to

- Explain the four noble truths based on the early discourses
- Explain *dukkha* in detail in terms of birth, aging, sickness, death etc.
- Explain both the origin and the passing away of suffering.

Student Activities:

- Read each of the Readings carefully and underline/ highlight the key words and concepts in each reading.
- Draw a mind-map around the main topic linking the key words and concepts that you underlined or highlighted in the readings showing their relationship to the main topic and also to each other
- Read the given original sources to be familiar with the texts
- Prepare a chart on the four noble truths with details given to each truth, i.e., *dukkha*: birth, aging, sickness etc

For your journal entries, write detailed accounts on the following: the four noble truths, five aggregates, six senses

Reading 1: Four Noble Truths

The suffering that characterizes human existence is often categorized into four types: birth, old age, illness, and death. And additional four types are sometimes added: separation from loved ones, association with people one dislikes, inability to obtain what one desires, and clinging to the five aggregates. The periods of happiness that occur in a person's life invariably end when he is confronted with the suffering of illness and death. The basic cause of such suffering lies in man's clinging to his existence. When birth, old age, illness, and death are considered as natural phenomena, they are not suffering. They are characterized as suffering only when considered from the point of view of the individual. Because birth, old age, illness, and death are inescapable facts of human existence, suffering is called the First Noble Truth. The full extent to which human existence is characterized by suffering can only be understood by a noble disciple.

The Second Noble Truth concerns the cause of suffering. Existence entails suffering for the individual because of the very basic mental attribute of 'thirst', which lies at the bottom of all of his desires. This thirst is never satisfied; it is the desire that lies at the heart of man's discontent. It is called 'thirst' because in intensity it resembles the fervent longing for water of a man with a parched throat. Man is reborn because of this thirst; it is therefore called 'the cause of rebirth.' Suffering and rebirth are difficult to escape because man seeks unceasingly to satisfy his thirsts, lusts, and longing for happiness.

Three basic types of desire or thirst are distinguished: the desire for sensual objects, the desire for continued existence, and the desire for nonexistence. The desire for sensual objects includes the desire for objects of the senses and objects of sexual lust. The desire for existence is the desire for eternal existence, and the desire for nonexistence is the desire to terminate existence. These specific types of desires must be distinguished from thirst because thirst can never be satisfied and is the basis of all desires. It is sometimes identified with ignorance. The various defilements all arise and taint the mind because of thirst and ignorance. Thus the Second Noble Truth concerns the cause of suffering, the way in which thirst is the basis of all defilements.

The Third Noble Truth, the extinction of suffering, concerns the eradication of thirst. This state is called Nibbāna. Because the mind is freed from all the fetters of thirst, Nibbāna is also called emancipation (*vimutti/vimokkha, mokkha*). A person is first partially freed through wisdom, a stage called 'emancipation through understanding' (*pannavimutti*). Next, all the defilements are eradicated and the entire mind is freed, a stage called 'emancipation of the mind' (*cetovimutti*). In this state the mind operates in complete freedom, unaffected by thirst. Because true bliss is experienced, Nibbāna is sometimes said to be the bliss of extinction. Because the term Nibbāna may be translated as 'extinction,' some people have considered Nibbāna to be a nihilistic state. However, only thirst is extinguished, not the mind itself. Through the extinction of thirst, correct wisdom is manifested, and with that wisdom the unchanging truth of Nibbāna is realized. Thus Nibbāna would seem to be a state of existence that can be logically posited. However, Nibbāna can also be understood as 'perfect peace,' the tranquility of the mind that has realized Nibbāna. Some scholars prefer to interpret Nibbāna as perfect peace.

The Fourth Noble Truth is the way that leads to the cessation of suffering. It is explained through the Eightfold Noble Path, which consists of cultivating the following attitudes and practices: right views, right thought, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. The first element of the path, right views, refers to 'seeing things as they actually are.' The person who sees the world and himself as they actually are comes to know the truth of Dependent Co-Arising. On the basis of right views, right thought arises, and is followed by right speech, right actions, right livelihood, and right effort. If the Buddhist's everyday life is based on right views, his life is in accord with religious truth. The seventh element of the eightfold path, right mindfulness, has two aspects, right awareness and right memory. Together they are the mental powers necessary to maintain a correct state of mind. The last element of the eightfold path is right concentration. On the basis of right views and right mindfulness, the Buddhist practitioner unifies and controls his mind, and thereby practices right concentration or meditation. Of the eight elements of the path, right views and right concentration are the most important. Wisdom arises out of meditation. By practicing the eightfold noble path, the Buddhist can realize Nibbāna or deliverance.

Suffering: The First Noble Truth

- Four Noble Truths (*catu-ariya-sacca*)
 - Buddha was the discover of the four truths of *dukkha, samudaya, nirodha, magga*

Problem, cause, solution, and path are the four

- What to do with the Four
 - Problem to be fully understood
 - Cause(s) to be abandoned
 - Solution to be realized

Path to be developed.

- *Dukkha* (unsatisfactory)
 - A problem that we all experience & know
 - A problem that we all wish to avoid
 - Most of our activities & endeavors are to avoid suffering (*dukkha-paṭikkūlā*) and to experience happiness (*sukha-kāma*)
 - Few people succeed in achieving happiness, contentment, & inner peace

One who sees *dukkha* sees also the arising of *dukkha*, the cessation of *dukkha*, and the path leading to the cessation of *dukkha* (S V, 437)

- Forms of Suffering
 - Physical and mental pains caused by our such negative mental states as fear, boredom, worry, grief, & loneliness
 - Pains due to bodily sickness, injury, aging & tiredness
 - Pains due to change

Suffering of conditioned formations

- Impermanent are the Five Aggregates (=Conditioned formations)
 - Form is like a lump of foam (*phena-pināda*)
 - Feeling is like a water bubble (*bubbula*)
 - Perception is mirage (*marīci*)
 - Formations are like a plantain trunk (*kadali-kkhandha*)

Consciousness is like an illusion (*māyā*)

- *Anicca* – impermanent, change – *aniccatā* = impermanency
 - *Uppāda/udaya* - arising
 - *Vaya* - passing away
 - *Ṭhitassa aññathatta* – change of what has been
 - *Viparināma-dhamma* – subject to change

What is born is sure to perish

- Have I seen the change?
 - Growth/ aging in me, my family members, associates, relatives, teachers
 - Deaths of my close ones
 - Sickness
 - Unions and separations

"While on this long voyage, you wandered aimlessly from birth to birth, and you groaned and you wept because you had a share in what you hated and you did not have a share in what you liked. There have flowed, there have been shed by you more tears than there is water in the four great oceans." (S II, 180)

- Aging and Death
 - "If such a great peril should arise, such a terrible destruction of human life, the human state being so difficult to obtain, what else should be done but to live by the Dhamma to live righteously and to do wholesome and meritorious deeds." (said the King Pasenadi)
 - "I inform you, great king, I announce to you: aging and death are rolling in on you." (said the Buddha)
 - "Short is the life span of human beings."
 - "The days and nights go flying by. Life comes to stop."

"Time flies by, the nights swiftly pass, the stages of life successively desert us, seeing clearly this danger in death, one should do deeds of merit that brings happiness/ a seeker of peace should drop the world's bait."

- Undiscoverable is the beginning of *Samsāra* (one's journey through the cycle of birth and death)
 - Gone are the previous Buddhas and their disciples; the previous country/ city names and the people lived there; the previous civilizations and dynasties

"See, that name for this mountain has disappeared, those people have died, and that Buddha has attained *parinirvāṇa*; So impermanent are formations, so unstable, so unreliable; It is enough to experience revulsion towards all formations, enough to become dispassionate towards them, enough to be liberated from them; There will come a time when the name for this mountain will have disappeared, when these people will have died, and I (the Buddha) will have attained *parinirvāṇa*; Impermanent, alas, are formations, subject to arising and vanishing." (S II, 190-93)

- Impermanence of the earth and the continuity of suffering
 - "There comes a time when the great earth burns up and perishes and no longer exists." "There comes a time when the great ocean dried up and evaporates and no longer exists."

"But still there is no making end of suffering for those beings roaming and wandering on hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving."

- The Buddha saw
 - A man afflicted and gravely ill, lying fouled in his own excrement and urine.
 - A corpse of a man thrown aside in a charnel ground, bloated and oozing.
 - An old sick person who experienced lot of pain due to his will to move in spite of his physical inability to do so.
 - A wrinkled old woman who was earlier desired by many for her beauty walked in the street alone supported by a walking stick, tottering, frail, her youth gone, her teeth broken.
 - An innocent forest deer who was bound on a heap of snares and met death with the hands of a hunter.
 - A man who tried to grasp a snake at its tail died.
 - A fire burning up a village bringing disaster to all of its poor inhabitants.
 - A foolish cowherd who drove his cattle into the river Ganges without checking its water level and put his cattle into calamity and disaster.
 - A man abusing, reviling, and harassing his wife and children giving them lot of pain and insecurity.

A lady who was famous for her kindness giving her servant a blow with a knife injuring her head.

- Textual Categorization of Suffering
 - Birth (*jāti*)
 - Aging (*jarā*)
 - Sickness (*vyādhī*)
 - Death (*maraṇa*)
 - Sorrow (*soka*), lamentation (*parideva*), pain (*dukkha*), grief (*domanassa*), despair (*upāyāsa*)
 - Association with the dislike people (*appiyehi sampayogo*)
 - Separation from the loved ones (*piyehi vippayogo*)
 - Not obtaining what we wish (*yaṃ iccham taṃ na labhati*)

The Five Aggregates of Grasping are *dukkha* (*pañcupādāna-kkhandhā dukkhā*)

- Summarized definition
 - All things in my mental world are *anicca* (impermanence) & *dukkha* (unsatisfactory) (*sabbe sankhārā aniccā & dukkhā*)

All dependently arisen things are unsubstantial (*anatta*)

- Pessimistic?
 - Presents a path to overcome suffering, pain, death and rebirth & to attain the joy of *nibbāna*
 - Never denies the existence of joy and happiness in life
 - Never denies the satisfaction that we can derive from worldly things

Assāda – satisfaction (*a* + *svad* – to taste)

- Discovering the suffering in the sources of happiness/ enjoyment
 - Satisfaction ends with harmful consequences (*ādīnava*)
 - We crave for eternal/ permanent happiness
 - Things from which we derive happiness are impermanent/ unsatisfactory
 - Happiness derives from impermanent/ unsatisfactory things is temporary, cannot last long
 - Satisfaction always fall short of our expectation = lasting happiness

Therefore, *dukkha* is due to attachment to things that are themselves *dukkha*

- Belief in an eternal/ immortal self
 - Intended to satisfy our deep-seated craving for permanent happiness
 - But in reality, there is no permanent/ immutable entity/ soul
 - Moreover, belief in a permanent entity leads to selfishness and egoism (*ahaṃ-kāra, mamaṃ-kāra*)
 - Selfishness is the root cause of craving and its attendant suffering

Selflessness on the basis of a belief in a self is not satisfactory

- Suffering in Hell is presented
 - In a form of punishment for evil

As a device to encourage a moral and virtuous life

- In the case Heaven
 - People may not be inclined to perform good deeds

But they crave for the fruits of such deeds

- In the case of Hell
 - People knowingly perform evil deeds
 - They dislike the consequences

Therefore, people must be strongly discourage to do evil deeds by dramatization

- In the Hell (M II, 178-187)
 - Evil doer is made to go before Yama (the king of the Hell)
 - Yama questions the evil doer about the divine messengers that he sent to the world of human beings

Five messengers – birth, old age, disease, punishments meted out to evil doers by the rulers, & death

- Where is the Hell?

- Ignorant people believe that there is a hell (pātāla) beneath the ocean
- Hell is not called a world but heaven is a world just like that of humans
- Hell is a term for painful feelings (*dukkhā vedanā*) – M I, 74)
- Experiences in the hell are suffering in the extreme (Dhp 44-45)

Hell (*niraya*) is defined by *āpāya* (purgatory), *duggati* (evil destiny) and *vinipāta* (fallen state)

- Raṭṭhapālasutta (M II 54-74)
 - Reasons for becoming monks as given by the king Koravya: four kinds of losses:
 - Loss through aging,
 - Loss through sickness,
 - Loss of wealth
 - Loss of relatives
 - Because of these losses the person is no longer capable of acquiring un-acquired wealth or augmenting the wealth already acquired."
 - Reasons for Raṭṭhapāla's becoming a monk:
 - "Life in any world is unstable, it is swept away" (*upanīyati loko addhuvo*). "Now I am old, aged, burdened with years, advanced in life, come to the last stage; my years have turned eighty. Sometimes I mean to put my foot here and I put my foot somewhere else."
 - "Life in any world has no shelter and no protector" (*attāno loko anabhissaro*). "I cannot command my friends and companions, kinsmen and relatives: "Come. All of you present share this painful feeling so that I may feel less pain." I have to feel that pain alone.
 - "Life in any world has nothing of its own; one has to leave all and pass on" (*assako loko sabbam pahāya gamanīyam*). "I cannot have it thus of the life to come. On the contrary, others will take over this property while I shall have to pass on according to my actions."

Life in any world is incomplete, insatiate, the slave of craving (*ūno loko atitto taṇhādāso*). "We would conquer that rich country and reign it."

- Balanced Mind

When a mother was asked why she did not lament over the death of her beloved son, she answered: "Unasked he came here, unasked he left here, as he came so he went, what use is there in lamenting?" (Uraga-Jataka, no.354)

Reading from the Original Sources

From Sacca-Samyutta (SN)

At Savatthi.

"Bhikkhus, develop concentration. A bhikkhu who is concentrated understands things as they really are.

"And what does he understand as it really is? He understands as it really is: 'This is suffering.' He understands as it really is: 'This is the origin of suffering.' He understands as it really is: 'This is the cessation of suffering.' He understands as it really is: 'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering.'

"Bhikkhus, develop concentration. A bhikkhu who is concentrated understands things as they really are.

"Therefore, bhikkhus, an exertion should be made to understand: 'This is suffering.' An exertion should be made to understand: 'This is the origin of suffering.' An exertion should be made to understand: 'This is the cessation of suffering.'" An exertion should be made to understand: 'This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering.'

On one occasion a number of elder bhikkhus were dwelling among the Cetiyans at Sahajati. Now on that occasion when the elder bhikkhus had returned from their alms round, after their meal they had assembled in the pavilion and were sitting together when this conversation arose: "Friend, does one who sees suffering also see the origin of suffering, also see the cessation of suffering, also see the way leading to the cessation of suffering?"

When this was said, the Venerable Gavampati said to the elder bhikkhus: "Friends, in the presence of the Blessed One I have heard and learnt this: 'Bhikkhus, one who sees suffering also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the origin of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering. One who sees the way leading to the cessation of suffering also sees suffering, also sees the origin of suffering, also sees the cessation of suffering.'"

"Bhikkhus, just as a stick thrown up into the air falls now on its bottom, now on its top, so too as beings roam and wander on, hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving, now they go from this world to the other world, now they come from the other world to this world. For what reason? Because they have not seen the Four Noble Truths. What four? The noble truth of suffering ... the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.

"Therefore, bhikkhus, an exertion should be made to understand the Four Noble Truths.

The Origin and the Passing Away of Suffering

Bhadraka the headman: "It would be good, venerable sir, if the Blessed One would teach me about the origin and the passing away of suffering."

Buddha: "If, headman, I were to teach you about the origin and the passing away of suffering with reference to the past, saying, 'So it was in the past,' perplexity and uncertainty about that might arise in you. And if I were to teach you about the origin and the passing away of suffering with reference to the future, saying, 'So it will be in the future,' perplexity and uncertainty about that might arise in you. Instead, headman, while I am sitting right here, and you are sitting right there, I will teach you about the origin and the passing away of suffering. Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak."

Bhadraka: "Yes, venerable sir."

Buddha: "What do you think, headman? Are there any people in Uruvelakappa on whose account sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair would arise in you if they were to be executed, imprisoned, fined, or censured?"

Bhadraka: "There are such people, venerable sir."

Buddha: "But are there any people in Uruvelakappa on whose account sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair would not arise in you in such an event?"

Bhadraka: "There are such people, venerable sir."

Buddha: "What, headman, is the cause and reason why in relation to some people in Uruvelakappa sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair would arise in you if they were to be executed, imprisoned, fined, or censured, while in regard to others no such sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair would arise in you?"

Bhadraka: "Those people in Uruvelakappa, venerable sir, in relation to whom sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair would arise in me if they were to be executed, imprisoned, fined, or censured – these are the ones for whom I have desire and attachment. But those people in Uruvelakappa in relation to whom no sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair would arise in me – these are the ones for whom I have no desire and attachment."

Buddha: "Headman, by means of this principle that is seen, understood, immediately attained, fathomed, apply the method to the past and to the future thus: 'Whatever suffering arose in the past, all that arose rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for desire is the root of suffering. Whatever suffering will arise in the future, all that will arise rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for desire is the root of suffering.'"

Bhadraka: "It is wonderful, venerable sir! It is amazing, venerable sir! How well that has been stated by the Blessed One: 'Whatever suffering arises, all that is rooted in desire, has desire as its source; for desire is the root of suffering.' Venerable sir, I have a boy named Ciravāsī, who stays at an outside residence. I rise early and send a man, saying, 'Go, man, and find out how Ciravāsī is.' Until that man returns, venerable sir, I am upset, thinking, 'I hope Ciravāsī has not met with any affliction!'"

Buddha: "What do you think, headman? If Ciravāsī were to be executed, imprisoned, fined, or censured, would sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair arise in you?"

Bhadraka: "Venerable sir, if Ciravāsī were to be executed, imprisoned, fined, or censured, even my life would be upset, so how could sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair not arise in me?"

Buddha: "In this way too, headman, it can be understood: 'Whatever suffering arises, all that arises rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for desire is the root of suffering.'"

Buddha: "What do you think, headman? Before you saw Ciravāsī's mother or heard about her, did you have any desire, attachment, or affection for her?"

Bhadraka: "No, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Then was it, headman, because of seeing her or hearing about her that this desire, attachment, and affection arose in you?"

Bhadraka: "Yes, venerable sir."

Buddha: "What do you think, headman? If Ciravāsī's mother were to be executed, imprisoned, fined, or censured, would sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair arise in you?"

Bhadraka: Venerable sir, if Ciravāsī's mother were to be executed, imprisoned, fined, or censured, even my life would be upset, so how could sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair not arise in me?"

Buddha: "In this way too, headman, it can be understood: 'Whatever suffering arises, all that arises rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for desire is the root of suffering.'

(SN IV, 327-330)

Turning the Wheel of Dharma

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Bārānasī in the Deer Park at Isipatana. There the Blessed One addressed the monks of the group of five thus:

"Monks, these two extremes should not be followed by one who has gone forth into homelessness. What two? The pursuit of sensual happiness in sensual pleasures, which is low, vulgar, the way of the worldling, ignoble, unbeneficial; and the pursuit of self-mortification, which is painful, ignoble, unbeneficial. Without veering towards either of these extremes, the Tathāgata has awakened to the middle way, which gives rise to vision, which gives rise to knowledge, and leads to peace, to direct knowledge, to full awakening, to Nibbāna.

"And what, monks, is that middle way awakened to by the Tathāgata? It is this Noble Eight-factored Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This, monks, is that middle way awakened to by the Tathāgata, which gives rise to vision, which gives rise to knowledge, which leads to peace, to direct knowledge, to full awakening, to Nibbāna.

"Now *this*, monks, for the noble truth of suffering: birth is suffering, aging is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering; union with what is displeasing is suffering; separation from what is pleasing is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates subject to clinging are suffering.

"Now *this*, monks, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering: it is this craving that leads to renewed existence, accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there; that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, craving for extermination.

"Now *this*, monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering: it is the remainderless fading away and cessation of that same craving, the giving up and relinquishing of it, freedom from it, nonattachment.

"Now *this*, monks, is the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering: it is this Noble Eight-factored Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

"'This is the noble truth of suffering': thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of suffering is to be fully understood: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of suffering has been fully understood: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

"This is the noble truth of the origin of suffering': thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of the origin of suffering is to be abandoned: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of the origin of suffering has been abandoned: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

"This is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering': thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of the cessation of suffering is to be realized: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of the cessation of suffering has been realized: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

"This is the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering': thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering is to be developed: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

This noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering has been developed: thus, monks, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, penetration, and light.

"So long, monks, as my knowledge and vision of these four noble truths as they really are in their three phases and twelve aspects was not thoroughly purified in this way, I did not claim to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with its devas, Māra and Brahmā, in this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its devas and humans. But when my knowledge and vision of these four noble truths as they really are in their three phases and twelve aspects was thoroughly purified in this way, then I claimed to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with its devas, Māra and Brahmā, in this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its devas and humans. The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'Unshakeable is the liberation of my mind. This is my last birth. Now there is no more renewed existence.'"

This is what the Blessed One said. Elated, the monks of the group of five delighted in the Blessed One's statement. And while this discourse was being spoken, there arose in the Venerable Kondañña the dust-free, stainless vision of the Dhamma: "Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation."

And when the wheel of the Dhamma had been set in motion by the Blessed One, the earth-dwelling devas raised a cry: "At Bārānasi, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, this unsurpassed wheel of the Dhamma has been set in motion by the Blessed One, which cannot be stopped by any ascetic or brahmin or deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world." Having heard the cry of the earth-dwelling devas, the devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings raised a cry: "At Bārānasi ... this unsurpassed wheel of the Dhamma has been set in motion by the Blessed One, which cannot be stopped ... by anyone in the world." Having heard the cry of the devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings, the Tāvātimsa devas ... the Yāma devas ... the Tusita devas ... the devas who delight in creating ... the devas who wield power over others' creations ... the devas of Brahmā's company raised a cry: "At Bārānasi ... anyone in the world."

Thus at that moment, at that instant, at that second, the cry spread as far as the brahma world, and this ten-thousand-fold world system shook, quaked, and trembled, and an immeasurable great radiance surpassing the divine majesty of the devas appeared in the world.

(SN V, 420-24)

From Sammāditthisutta

Suffering

"When, friends, a noble disciple understands suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering, in that way he is one of right view, whose view is straight, who has confirmed confidence in the Dhamma and has arrived at this true Dhamma."

"And what is suffering, what is the origin of suffering, what is the cessation of suffering, what is the way leading to the cessation of suffering? Birth is suffering; aging is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, dejection, and despair are suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates subject to clinging are suffering. This is called suffering.

"And what is the origin of suffering? It is this craving that leads to renewed existence, accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there; that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, craving for extermination. This is called the origin of suffering.

"And what is the cessation of suffering? It is the remainderless fading away and cessation of that same craving, the giving up and relinquishing of it, freedom from it, nonattachment.

"And what is the way leading to the cessation of suffering? It is just this noble eightfold path: that is, right view ... right concentration. This is called the way leading to the cessation of suffering.

"When a noble disciple has thus understood suffering, the origin of suffering, cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering ... he here and now makes an end of suffering. In that way too a noble disciple is one of right view ... and has arrived at this true Dhamma.

Aging and Death

"And what is aging and death, what is the origin of aging and death, what is the cessation of aging and death, what is the way leading to the cessation of aging and death?

The aging of beings in the various orders of beings, their old age, brokenness of teeth, grayness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline of life, weakness of faculties – this is called aging. The passing of beings out of the various orders of beings, their passing away, breakup disappearance, dying,

completion of time, the breakup of the aggregates, laying down of the body – this is called death. So this aging and this death are what is called aging and death. With the arising of birth there is the arising aging and death. With the cessation of birth there is the cessation of aging and death. The way leading to the cessation of aging and death is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Birth

"And what is birth, what is the origin of birth, what is the cessation of birth, what is the way leading to the cessation of birth? The birth of beings in the various orders of beings, their coming to birth, precipitation in a womb, generation, manifestation of the aggregates, obtaining the bases for contact – this is called birth. With the arising of existence there is the arising of birth. With the cessation of existence there is the cessation of birth. The way leading to the cessation of birth is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Existence

"And what is existence, what is the origin of existence, what is the cessation of existence, what is the way leading to the cessation of existence? There are these three kinds of existence: sense-sphere existence, form-sphere existence, and formless-sphere existence. With the arising of clinging there is the arising of existence. With the cessation of clinging there is the cessation of existence. The way leading to the cessation of existence is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Clinging

"And what is clinging, what is the origin of clinging, what is the cessation of clinging, what is the way leading to the cessation of clinging? There are these four kinds of clinging: clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and observances, and clinging to a doctrine of self. With the arising of craving there is the arising of clinging. With the cessation of craving there is the cessation of clinging. The way leading to the cessation of clinging is just his noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Craving

"And what is craving, what is the origin of craving, what is the cessation of craving, what is the way leading to the cessation of craving? There are these six classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odors, craving for flavors, craving for tactile objects, craving for mental phenomena. With the arising of feeling there is the arising of craving. With the cessation of feeling there is the cessation of craving. The way leading to the cessation of craving is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Feeling

"And what is feeling, what is the origin of feeling, what is the cessation of feeling, what is the way leading to the cessation of feeling? There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, feeling born of ear-contact, feeling born of nose-contact, feeling born of tongue-contact, feeling born of body-contact, feeling born of mind-contact. With the arising of contact there is the arising of feeling. With the cessation of contact there is the cessation of feeling. The way leading to the cessation of feeling is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Contact

"And what is contact, what is the origin of contact, what is the cessation of contact, what is the way leading to the cessation of contact? There are these six classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-

contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, mind-contact. With the arising of six sense bases there is the arising of contact. With the cessation of the six sense bases there is the cessation of contact. The way leading to the cessation of contact is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

The Six Sense Bases

"And what are the six sense bases, what is the origin of the six sense bases, what is the cessation of the six sense bases, what is the way leading to the cessation of the six sense bases? There are these six sense bases: the eye-base, the ear-base, the nose-base, the tongue-base, the body-base, the mind-base. With the arising of name-and-form there is the arising of the six sense bases. With the cessation of name-and-form there is the cessation of the six sense bases. The way leading to the cessation of the six sense bases is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Name-and-form

"And what is name-and-form, what is the origin of name-and-form, what is the cessation of name-and-form, what is the way leading to the cessation of name-and-form? Feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention – these are called name. The four great elements and the form derived from the four great elements – these are called form. So this name and this form are what is called name-and-form. With the arising of consciousness there is the arising of name-and-form. With the cessation of consciousness there is the cessation of name-and-form. The way leading to the cessation of name-and-form is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Consciousness

"And what is consciousness, what is the origin of consciousness, what is the cessation of consciousness, what is the way leading to the cessation of consciousness? There are these six classes of consciousness: eye- consciousness, ear- consciousness, nose- consciousness, tongue- consciousness, body- consciousness, mind- consciousness. With the arising of volitional formations there is the arising of consciousness. With the cessation of volitional formations there is the cessation of consciousness. The way leading to the cessation of consciousness is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Volitional Formations

And what are the volitional formations, what the origin of volitional formations, what is the cessation of volitional formations, what is the way leading to the cessation of volitional formations? There are these three kinds of volitional formations: the bodily volitional formation, the verbal volitional formation, the mental volitional formation. With the arising of ignorance there is the arising of volitional formations. With the cessation of ignorance there is the cessation of volitional formations. The way leading to the cessation of volitional formations is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Ignorance

"And what is ignorance, what is the origin of ignorance, what is the cessation of ignorance, what is the way leading to the cessation of ignorance? Not knowing about suffering, not knowing about the origin of suffering, not knowing about the cessation of suffering, not knowing about the way leading to the cessation of suffering – this is called ignorance. With the arising of the taints there is the arising of ignorance. With the cessation of the taints there is the cessation of ignorance. The way leading to the cessation of ignorance is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view ... right concentration.

Taints

"And what are the taints, what is the origin of the taints, what is the cessation of the taints, what is the way leading to the cessation of the taints? There are these three taints: the taint of sensual desire, the taint of existence, and the taint of ignorance. With the arising of ignorance there is the arising of the taints. With the cessation of ignorance there is the cessation of taints. The way leading to the cessation of the taints is just this noble eightfold path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

"When a noble disciple has thus understood the taints, the origin of the taints, the cessation of the taints, and the way leading to the cessation of the taints, he entirely abandons the underlying tendency to lust, he abolishes the underlying tendency to aversion, he extirpates the underlying tendency to the view and conceit 'I am,' and by abandoning ignorance and arousing true knowledge he here and now makes an end of suffering. In that way too a noble disciple is one of right view, whose view is straight, who has perfect confidence in the Dhamma, and has arrived at this true Dhamma."

That is what the Venerable Sariputta said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the Venerable Sariputta's words. (MN I, 46-55).